



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Data Report



Special Educator Induction Program

Introducing the Wisconsin Special Educator Induction Program

In Wisconsin:

- The highest number of educator preparation program completers by subject area is in special education.
- The subject area in which most districts (74%) reported vacancies was special education.
- Almost half of Wisconsin's new special education teachers drop out of teaching by year six, shedding light on the urgent need for sustainable retention strategies.

To support the success and retention of new special educators, the Wisconsin Special Educator Induction Program offers a multi-year, statewide initiative delivered through each CESA.

This program provides structured professional learning, personalized coaching, and a strong support network to help educators navigate their first critical years in the field.

About the Program

The Department of Public Instruction's (DPI) Special Education Team has prioritized the recruitment and retention of special educators. According to the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR Center), up to 50% of new special educators are more likely than experienced educators to leave their jobs in the first few years. Yet first-year educators who participated in a comprehensive set of induction activities were half as likely to leave the field as those who did not participate. (Strong & Ingersoll, 2004). Through an IDEA discretionary grant, DPI has partnered with the twelve regional CESAs to implement Wisconsin's Special Educator Induction Program.

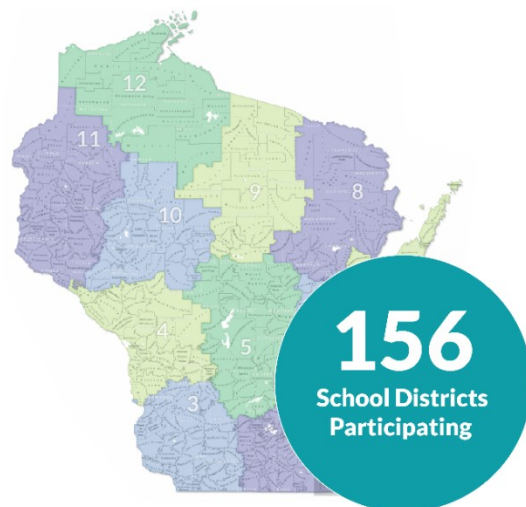
The induction program is designed for first- or second-year special educators and special educators holding a License with Stipulations (LWS). There is no cost to the district, and districts receive a financial incentive per participant to offset the cost associated with participation in the induction program. Participation in the induction program does not result in DPI licensure but is intended to supplement any Educator Preparation Program. 25-40 participants are selected in each CESA to participate in the induction program. Please see the following [one-page document](#) and view [participant testimonials](#) for more information.

2024 – 2025 Special Educator Induction Program Participation and Results

In 2024-2025, Wisconsin's Special Educator Induction Program completed its second year of implementation. 248 new special educators completed the program, representing 156 school districts and independent charter schools.

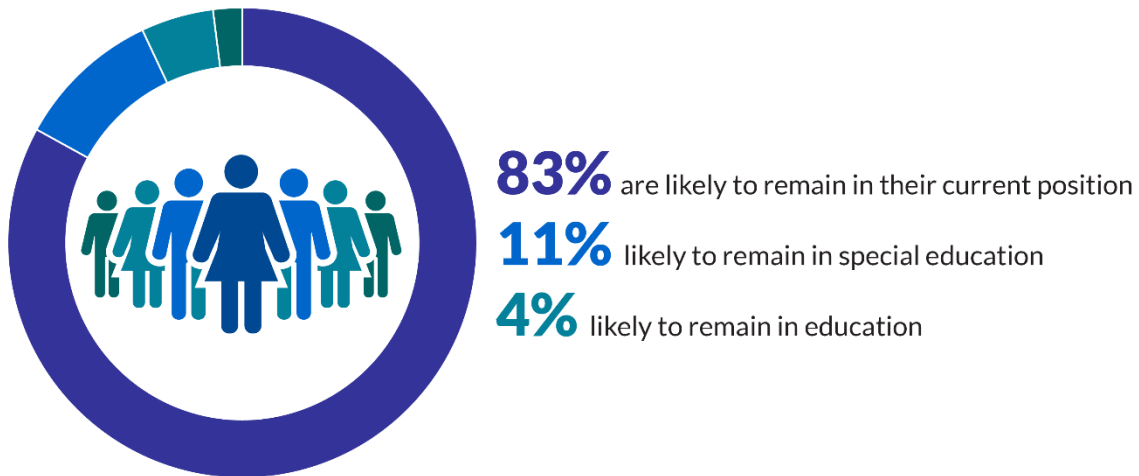
Participants shared that the combination of training and coaching was the most beneficial and they experienced the greatest increase in preparedness in special education requirements.

This second year of program implementation demonstrated very promising results, with 111 districts provided valuable feedback on the program's benefits.



Induction Program Participant Retention

Responses indicated 83% are likely to remain in their current position; 11% likely to remain in special education; and 4% likely to remain in education.



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Induction Program Benefits for Districts

95.7% of districts found the program beneficial for their participants, 80% felt the induction program led to the retention of their new special educators! and 92.6% of educational leaders also found it beneficial in their leadership roles.



Educators Forward!

Thanks to the Educators Forward State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) beginning in 2025-26, each educator who has completed the induction program will



have an opportunity for a second and third year of support, including focused learning and coaching. Read more about this on the [Educators Forward website](#).

With 97.3% of districts indicated they were likely to participate in the future, the Special Education Induction Program will continue next year!

Year 1 participants will engage in Professional Learning and Network Sessions, along with receiving individualized coaching. Year 2 and Year 3 participants will continue with Network Sessions and ongoing coaching support.

Program Participant Testimonials

“I appreciate everything this program has done for me to help me grow as an educator. The additional support has been a great resource to me as a brand-new special education teacher. I would like to continue with this program in any capacity that I can.”

“There were bits and pieces from every session that I found myself utilizing. It was great to receive and utilize specific pieces of feedback for concerns I was having. I have been able to work more collaboratively and be more confident within my role as a team.”

“There is not enough time in a day to facilitate the training our new teachers need to be successful. I appreciate the time given to our new staff to help them develop their skills to enhance the education of our student experience.”

Resources

Districts with new or LWS special educators are encouraged to contact the local CESA for participation and visit [Resources to Attract, Prepare, and Retain Special Educators](#) webpage for more information.

Read more about the Educators Forward State Personnel Development Grant (SPDG) on the [Educators Forward website](#).



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